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Aide Urged Sessions to Quit in February

Colleague Warned FBI Director About Conduct, Documents Show

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A senior FBI official privately urged William S. Sessions to resign as FBI director soon after the ethics scandal involving him became public, saying his conduct fell below that required for the office and accusing him of a "deceptive and misleading defense," according to Justice Department documents.

The Feb. 9, 1993, letter from Oliver "Buck" Revell, the FBI's former No. 3 official, and other documents released Friday under the Freedom of Information Act make a stronger case than previously disclosed against Sessions, who was fired July 19 by President Clinton after he refused to resign in the wake of a scathing Justice Department ethics report.

The Senate confirmed Friday night federal Judge Louis J. Freeh to succeed Sessions.

In an interview, Sessions noted with sarcasm that the letter was supposed to have been "personal and confidential" and declined to respond to Revell's criticism. "Mr. Revell will have to live with what he did," Sessions said.

The documents also note that Sessions obtained a $375,000 mortgage from Riggs National Bank at an interest rate of 8.65 percent and payment of a half-point loan fee, while the prevailing rate was 9.25 percent interest and three points.

These arrangements came after Joe L. Allbritton, Riggs chairman and chief executive, introduced Sessions and his wife, Alice, to a senior vice president of the bank, who then kept Allbritton apprised of how the loan arrangement was proceeding.

In his letter, Revell, now special agent in charge of the FBI's Dallas division, reminded Sessions that shortly after he became FBI director in 1987, the two of them had "an in-depth discussion on the appropriate use of your government vehicle, security staff and the perquisites of your office." The Justice Department's Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) found that Sessions acted improperly in all of these areas.

The conversation was triggered by Sessions sending his bureau limousine and driver to National Airport to pick up his father and bring him to FBI headquarters, Revell wrote.

"I pointed out that no government official can use a government vehicle for non-official purposes and to do so was a violation [of the U.S. code], with a mandatory minimum suspension from duty of 30 days," he wrote.

Revell told Sessions that a careful review of the OPR report, "based upon sworn testimony of FBI personnel, leaves no doubt that you took advantage of your position for personal gain and have abused your office to the point that you can no longer effectively serve as director."